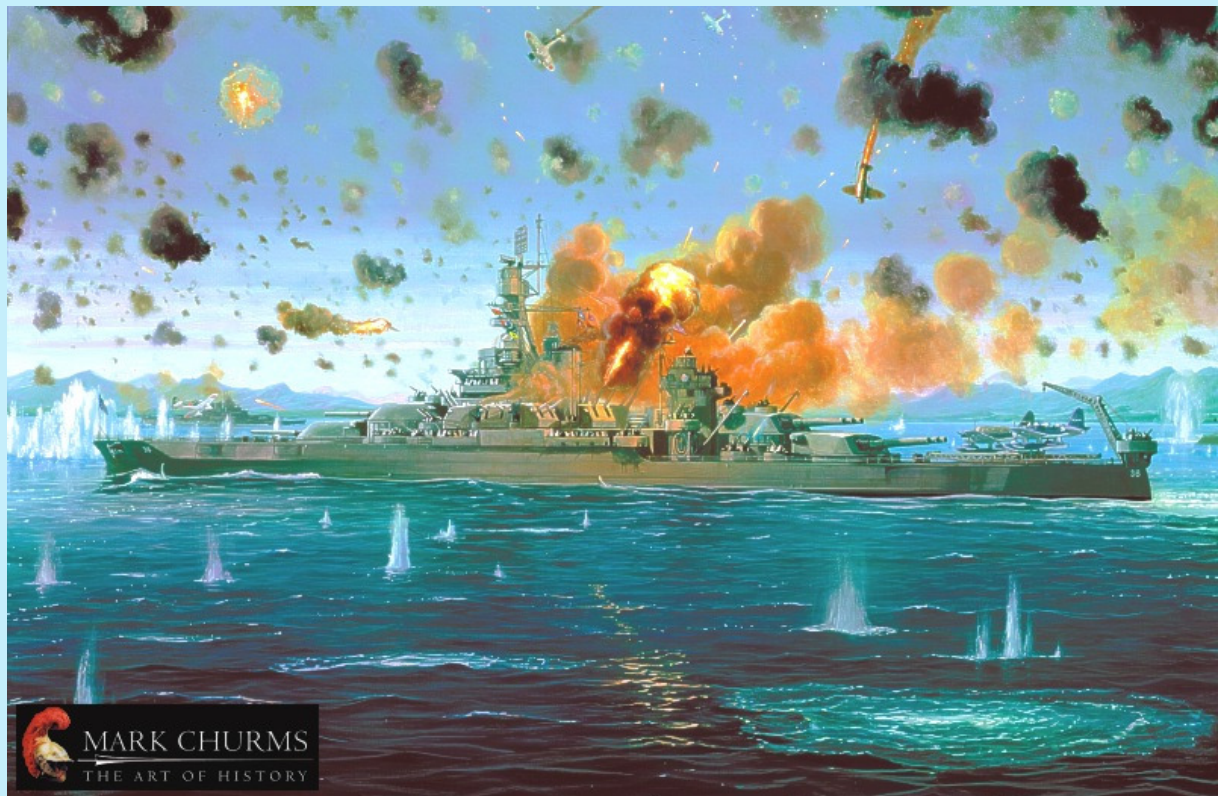# FLEET COMMANDER PACIFIC

Beta Version 1.0

(We will use nice pictures from Mark Churms for scenario information and game cover)

GENERAL PRESENTATION

FLEET COMMANDER: PACIFIC (FCP) is a digital simulation of the naval war in the Pacific from 1941 to 1945. All major surface combat ships of the Japanese and Allied navies are present in this grand scale simple (but not simplistic) strategic simulation of that massive conflict. Players also manage land-based air forces and marines contingents, as well as submarines. The land war aspect was deliberately left aside and is represented by fast and simple mechanisms, in order that players can focus on their role as Fleet Commander: the war at sea!

Acknowledgement: many of the gaming mechanics of the game bear similarities to those used in Avalon Hill's classic boardgame Victory in The Pacific (VITP), although many changes were made and added to the rules and game content to adapt the thematic and general gameplay to a new and enjoyable computer game.

NB: IN THE BETA, SOME ELEMENTS NOT YET IMPLEMENTED OR COMING AS OPTIONS ARE INDICATED BY A BLUEYISH BACKGROUND WHEN RELEVANT.

GAME ENTRY AND SCENARIO MENU

The game has simple main menu.

The scenario menu offers choice between the various playable scenarios, the sides selection (Japan or Allies) and some quick options.

NB: INGAME IN FRENCH, ENGLISH AND SPANISH ONLY AT THE MOMENT. MORE LANGUAGES WILL COME AFTER SUCCESSFUL KICKSTARTER.

Top Section (header)

Left **0**: menu return button

Middle: the 2 sides with their emblems **1** and current accrued VP tally (shows 0 in current screen). Clicking on the shield will display control filters.

Right **2**: the current date and the turn number

Phase Section (top center)

Middle: current side playing phase **3**, phase name, details indicator (**?** Button opens drop-down description), "Done" button **4** to go to next phase

Bottom Section

Stack **5** (also on map, same #) and list of units in selected stack (those active are highlighted with a yellow frame) usable in current phase. To select/unselect/filter ships in a stack, click on the various **6** filter buttons that you see appearing on top of the stack units list. A quick select all/unselect all **7** button is located on the left-hand side of the unit list.

Map Section / Screen Icons

On Map: island bases **8** (circle, plane silhouette) either friendly to player [red for Japan] or enemy, name indicated in the stamp below it, tooltipped), major ports **9** (hexagon shape, anchor silhouette), active player stack **5** in harbor (*square shape with letter id# and number of ships inside*), enemy player stack **10** in harbor, stack/LBA at sea on patrol in a sea zone **11** (*circle, with letter id# and number of ships inside*).

Most elements on map or on the UI have tooltips giving more details and information. Units display detailed tooltip when hovering the mouse over it (slight delay, no click needed). Selected stack has a yellowish coloring of id# and numbers and non selected stack have a white coloring . A grayed-out sea means it can't be reached by selected stack), and land regions are unplayable in this game.

Stacks ID shapes (around 3D model, on map)

In harbor: inside a square

At sea (on patrol or raid): inside a circle

GAME PIECES

The game playing pieces are of 4 different types: ships, land-based-planes (LBA's), subs and amphibious units (i.e. Marines).

Ships

Ships are the core of the game. The big ships (Carriers, Battleships, heavy Cruisers) are usually individual units.

NB : The smaller ships are usually a group of 2 to 6 ships or more, depending on their types and sizes, as follows: Light Cruisers (x2), Destroyers (x6), Submarines (x6-8), Other ships for convoys or marines (x10-20) . (*advanced option, will be done according to Kickstarter success*)

Ships are rated numerically for the various capacities

Surface (firepower): when engaged into a surface battle, 0 to 6

Air (firepower): for Carriers only, 1 to 4 (for air battles)

Speed: 6 being the 'normal', ships are either standard 0,
 +1/+2 (fast) or –3/-2/-1 slow
Some other special values (e.g. extra armor) may appear.

Elite units have a white circle indicator, and usually
Enjoy a +1 bonus to the concerned fire

Resistance: the number of damage points they can sustain, red show damages, green intact and grey those resistance of 0 (a single damage will sink it)
Other information such as type, general description, nationality, silhouette or historical photograph is shown in the unit's tooltip.

AA: number of anti-air shots (*advanced option, will be done according to Kickstarter success*)
ASW: value used for ASW warfare rolls (*advanced option, will be done according to Kickstarter success*)
CAP: the number of planes in CAP mode, used to repel enemy airplanes attack. CAP is usually a CV-factor**.** (*advanced option, will be done according to Kickstarter success*)

Land-Based Air (LBA)

Essential in combat and very important as they can control sea zones by themselves. Work like ships for combat firepower (air only). They are never disabled in battle, but can be damaged or destroyed. They don't actually move (ignore the speed info on them), as they are placed into sea zones where their side has base(s), one after the other, both sides alternating in the placement during the relevant phase.

Marines

Required to capture island bases by assault (they can't assault major ports), they work like ships but can't attack in sea battles (they can defend themselves though). US Marines are rather well defended with ASW, AA and CAP factors, representing their numerous escort ships.

Convoys (not in beta or version 1.0 – KS improvement)
Those units are non-combat ships representing the merchant shipping carrying essential war material and/or troops. They usually arrive as reinforcement in a base or port, and must reach (preferably unharmed) another port or base. If they succeed, they will grant large amounts of VPs.

Bases and Ports

There are 2 kinds: island bases (shown with an airstrip symbol) and major ports (with an anchor symbol). The former can be assaulted and captured by enemy marines, or fall from isolation. The latter only fall via isolation.

Stacks

When you click on a stack, the stack manager (Task Force) will pop up and display the units present in the stack. Units info on stacks is limited to the most useful (but tooltip on each ship is available).

You can use the remove units from the pop up by clicking on them. Use the Merge button to regroup units from different stacks in the same location if needed.

Usually, in the units list below the selected stack pop-up, you will see all other units that are also present in the same location. Currently selected ships (i.e. in the Task Force pop-up) are outlined in yellow. A grey-white vertical bar in the UI separates different stacks if more than one are present in the same location.

GAME SEQUENCE

The Grand Campaign game (the whole Pacific War) lasts 9 turns (+ a 10th, optional), each of about 4 months duration. Smaller scenarios have usually a 1 or 2 turns duration, as they are used to get experienced with the game.

NB: there is a special Turn 0 which is detailed at the end of the game for the initial December 1941 surprise attacks.

Both sides play in alternance phase by phase. Japanese first, followed by the Allies, as this represents the advantage the Americans had obtained through reading the Japanese Navy code.

Important Exception: during the Land-based Air placement phase, sides will place each of their individual air units alternatively (and not all of them Japan first followed by Allies as in other phases).

GAME OBJECTIVE

Each turn, both sides will attempt to control the key sea areas on the map. Each of those brings Victory Points (VP), not always the same for each side in a given sea, representing the different strategic importance of the various seas to the respective sides. At the end of the turn, once scores have been calculated, the leading side gets the balance and accrued it to its overall score.

The winner of the game is the side with a positive VP balance at the end of the scenario in play.

When clicking on the Score sign in the sea zones, you can see the controller and the number of VP the sea zone is bringing to them.
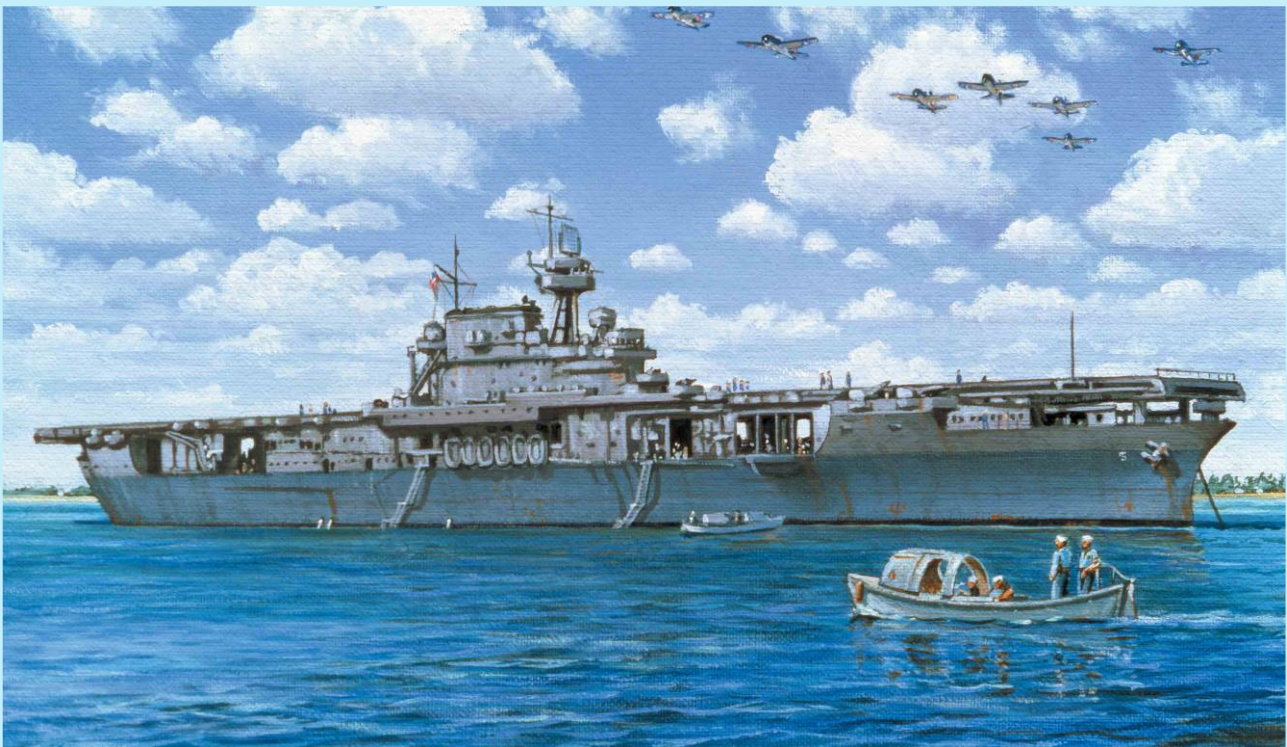
GAME PHASES

They are all identical each turn, except the special case of the surprise attack phase of December 1941 (see end of those rules).

In sequence:

- Arrival of reinforcements in a friendly port, or removal of units if required by date/turn.
- Moving Patrols out to sea, to take control of the sea areas.
- Placement of LBAs (land-based aircrafts), one at a time, sides alternating (*reminder: different from other phases*). Only in allowed seas. Those LBAs can control sea zones.
- Movement of amphibious units and convoys.
- Raid Missions with the aim of making attacks or defenses in sea areas, but not allowing future sea control (raiding ships return to base before control checks). Failed Speed Rolls (see movement rules) raiders, if any, now have a special retreat phase where they must return to a base.
- Placement of submarines (toward a sea with a planned battle, if none, no placement).
- Resolution of naval battles, in the order selected by the Japanese player, sea area by sea area. Battle sequence is described hereafter.
- Landing of Marines, if they did not take place during battles.
- Return to port of all Raid Missions.
- Check of sea areas control and change of ownership of isolated bases.
- Return to base of land-based aircrafts and return to port for all patrolling ships and convoys.
- Repair of damaged units in ports (units that are repaired won't move the next turn).

BATTLE PHASES

Each battle follows the same process below, for as long as units of both sides remain in the currently selected sea area:

BEFORE START

- The **First** thing is the selection of the battle round type, choice being between air and surface. Should the choices of both sides differ, a random selection with a 6-sided die is made, with various bonus for air action (+1) and current sea control (+1)

Battle UI: Screen below shows what you see at the start of the battle (before 1st round)

Top Section

Similar to the main map screen, all disabled except Menu 0 (so no click on sides,score 1 or turn 2)

Log Section

On the left-hand side, a dynamic log 3 will give you every battle event in chronological order.

Battle Selection screen

Choose between Day (Air) or Night (Surface) - or Retreat after round #1 - by pressing the choice button 4. Modifiers to your choice are indicated 5 here. Your die-score is in the grey box afterwards 6. Winner score is color coded in green.

Press button 7 to start the round of battle.

Battleline organization and Information

Ships and LBA are drawn in one or two lines depending on the number of units present. In surface combat, some ships can go to the Reserve (press the relevant button, they will move back) to avoid being shot at if the enemy has less surface ships (Ships in reserve cannot be fired at unless all ships in front are also already shot at).

Ships remaining hit points 9 are indicated as green bullets (red bullets indicate an already damaged ship).

Ships which are patrolling are showing a little flag 9 on the 3D model and in the stack list at the bottom.

Battle Participant (bottom section)

The display at the bottoms lists all the units in the battle 10, either active, disabled or sunk.

- Exchanges of fire, air or surface, are simultaneous, although visually executed and shown one side after the other for better presentation aspect and understanding of the battle sequence. All units allowed to fire may select only one single valid target per unit per round. This full exchange (from both sides) is one round of battle, and it can be repeated until combat is over.

Battle UI targeting and animations

Screen next page shows what you see when you select who is firing and against whom, as well as animations. (*numbering continued from above screen*)
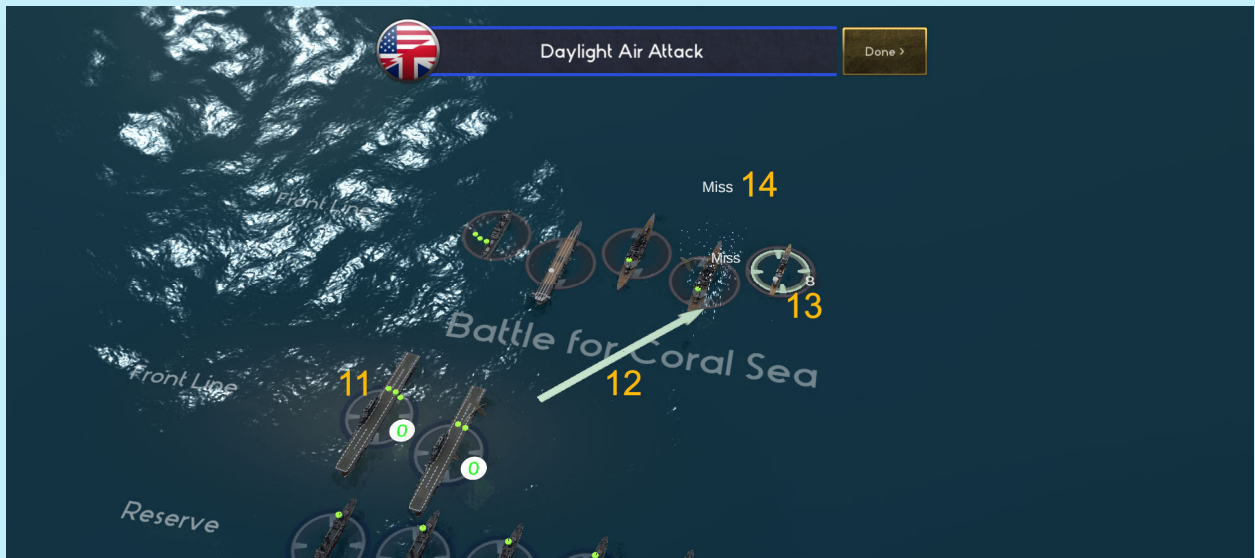
Ships display their remaining hit points (green bullets **11**) and an animation **12** goes towards the target enemy unit **13**. Combat results are shown by values, texts and animations **14**.

Ships disabled are shown with smoke **15** over them, those sunk with explosions **16**. When it is the turn of your ship to shoot, its selection circle turns orange **17**.

In both case the information is repeated on the unit stamp in the stack list at the bottom of the battle screen.

- Dice are modified by +1 for every Elite ships in their respective elite domain (surface or air).
- Ships may suffer disable results (equivalent to a modified roll of 5) or damages points (when a modified 6 is rolled, then another die is rolled, which value is the amount of damage inflicted). Accumulated damage strictly superior to the ships' protection factor sinks them. In ports (which can be attacked via air raids), ships can take double damage before sinking, but stay on the bottom and can't move (till repaired) if damage exceeds their base protection.
- When disabled, a ship leaves the battle (and will need to retreat after the battle, whatever the winning side).
- LBA's do not suffer disable results (those 5's are ignored), otherwise they behave like ships.
- Both sides may retreat totally or in part at the end of a battle round. If both remain, another round starts anew.
- In case of a retreat, unit can be pursued and fired at by non-retreating opponents if the respective ships speeds allow In other words you can't pursue faster ships.
- Retreats are made during battle but physically executed on the map after the battle is over. Retreating units can move toward bases or ports in the same sea, or any other possible base or port, provided the path does not go through more than one enemy-controlled sea.
- At the end of the battle, victorious side with aircraft carrier(s) may launch 2 rounds of air raids over bases/ports adjacent to the sea area. Each CV can only attack one base.
- During the battle, if a submarine is present, it may fire once (and cannot be fired back at). It will return to the submarine pool after the battle.

MOVEMENT OF SHIPS

It depends on their missions (patrol or raid) and their speed. Tests of success may be required (see Speed Rolls below).

MOVING

To move a stack, select it and left-click on the sea zone of destination. An arrow will show the path used by the stack. In addition, tooltip will indicate ships that may have to make a speed roll (see below) and their respective chance of success.

Tip: maintain the destination sea clicked (mouse button pressed) to keep the movement arrow displayed while you read it, otherwise it dynamically disappears after a few seconds.

RANGES & SPEED ROLLS

As a rule, crossing through an enemy-controlled sea area to another sea is forbidden (you may enter an enemy controlled sea, but not navigate though it.

PATROL PHASE

On **patrol**, a ship may move automatically into the **adjacent sea** and, possibly, one more sea further on if Speed Roll succeeds. Most fast ships will automatically succeed, while the slower ones must pass the Speed Roll and, <u>if they fail</u>, they will still enter the targeted sea BUT there status will be changed to RAID (so they will no longer be considered as patrollers, and won't be used for control).

NB : When a sea is out of range, the movement arrow turns red.

Speed Rolls: usually a roll equal to or lower than the ship's speed is required to pass the test. Ships with a + speed always succeed, while those with a – speed will fail between 30 and 50% of the time.

RAID PHASE

While **raiding**, ships are allowed **one extra sea**: they can move up to two sea zones without test and must pass Speed Rolls for the third one. <u>Raiding ships that fail</u> will NOT enter the third sea, they will be forced to retreat to a friendly base from that said sea. A special phase will be processed for those failures if needed.

BRITISH SHIPS IN RAIDS

While **raiding**, British, Dutch and Australian ships are allowed **only 2 seas, not 3**: they can move maximum 2 sea zones AND must make a Speed Roll for the second one

PLACEMENT OF LAND-BASE PLANES (LBAs)

Those units do not actually move but are 'placed' from the plane pool into sea areas adjacent to their sides' bases or ports. Therefore no such planes can be placed into a sea area where the side holds no bases or ports.

Each side, starting with Japan, places one land-based plane into one sea area, alternating one by one till both run out of planes. In the current beta version, there are no limits to the number of LBAs you can place in a sea zone, provided you have at least one base or port adjacent to it.

With the Advanced Option, a limit will be in place, as follows: for each base adjacent, one plane can be placed in a sea area, and three for each major port. The seas display the maximum number of LBAs they allow (see screen below).

LBA's can take and keep control of a sea area. If during a battle a side loses all bases and ports adjacent to the sea where the battle takes place (e.g. if amphibiously invaded), the said LBA unit is immediately returned to the pool.

SUBMARINE PLACEMENT

Submarine units (NB: one unit per side at the moment, more when the ASW option will be implemented) can be placed in any sea where a battle is taking place.

This occurs exactly like LBA placement, but without any distance or control considerations.

AIR RAIDS ON BASES AND PORTS

At the end of a battle, the victorious side, if it has aircraft carrier(s) [CV] present (not LBA's) may launch 2 rounds of air raids over bases/ports adjacent to the sea area with those same CV units. Each CV can only attack one base.

This is handled exactly like an air battle, except that the enemy ships do not return fire (in advanced version, AA and CAP will be active) and the air raid battle lasts only 2 rounds.

CONTROL OF THE SEAS

Only ships on patrol and LBAs currently at sea are used to determine control (NB: ships on raids have returned port before such control check is made). The side keeping or gaining control of a sea area earns as many VP as that sea area provides to that side.

Future Option (with enhanced submarine warfare): if enemy subs are on patrol in the said sea, control remains with the side having kept or gained it, but each sub causes the loss of 1 VP (up to the sea area VP value). A sea already under control remains so, even with patrols or planes, as long as the other side does not take it.

CAPTURE OF BASES AND PORTS

Bases can be captured by direct amphibious assault or via isolation. Ports can only be captured via isolation.

Isolation is when a base or port has all its adjacent seas under enemy control for two consecutive turns.

REPAIR OF SHIPS

Repair takes place ONLY in major ports, not in island bases. Each major port has a different allocation of repairs and each point of same removes one point of damage on the damaged ships in that port that the player selects. Unused repairs are lost, they cannot accumulate. LBAs and Marines are repaired for free.

Ships that have been repaired are presented with a specific icon and cannot move on the following turn.

SHIPS REINFORCEMENTS

They will arrive at the start of each turn in specified major ports. If the said port is not available or unfriendly, a default port is selected: US reinforcements arrive at the West Coast, British at Suez.

On Turn 1 of the Grand Campaign, some Allied ships will arrive as reinforcements directly at sea, AFTER all other patrol and raid movements. Those ships will not be allowed to move at all on that turn, but can retreat as they want, when possible.

REMOVALS

On certain turns, some ships (note: in that game they are all British Royal Navy capital ships) must be picked up and removed, as they are sent to other theaters of operations. Those not removed shall be replaced by possibly equivalent ships if the mandated ships have been sunk already.

If none is available, a lower class ship will be presented as potential removal target.

RETURNS OF LBAS AND MARINES AS REINFORCEMENTS

LBAs and Marines destroyed two turns before automatically return to play, the Marines in one major port (Yokosuka for Japan, Pear Harbor for USA). LBAs return directly into the plane pool.

For example, a LBA or Marines destroyed on Turn 1 will be back in the game as an extra reinforcement on Turn 3.

MARINES AND INVASIONS

The Marines units are used to capture enemy bases (not ports), or defend your own.

They have their own movement phase (called Amphibious) and can move up to two sea areas, without Speed Rolls need.

When battle is over in an area they are present, they can invade adjacent bases.

If not in a battle, landing or assault take place in a specific phase after all battles.

When assaulting, Marines automatically capture undefended enemy bases and are destroyed in the process (returning into play as reinforcements 2 turns later, as explained above), and the base becomes yours. If the target base is defended by (an) enemy Marines, each of the Marines unit eliminates one opposing enemy Marines, till all are destroyed on one side and, if possible, the base captured (which happens if there are more attacking Marines than defending Marines). Remember: Marines cannot assault enemy ports.

TURN 0 : THE DECEMBER 1941 SURPRISE ATTACKS

To represent the peculiarities of this surprise attack, there is a short Turn 0 sequence which unfolds as follows:

- Japanese Air Raid on Pearl Harbor, with the usual 2 round of battles common to air raids. The American LBA there, if it survives the 1st round, may return fire.
- Japanese Air Raid in Indonesia (*this is particular, occurring at sea and not in a base or port, but otherwise the same*). The Allied LBA there, if it survives the 1st round, may return fire.
- At the end of Turn 0, the 10 ships of the Japanese Task Force in the Hawaïan Islands automatically sail back to Japan, where they will remain locked for the whole of Turn 1 (*becoming free again on Turn 2*)
- The LBA's and ships of both sides in Indonesia remain at sea and don't return to pool or base. They will be engaged in a normal battle on Turn 1 in Indonesia (*if both sides have survivors*).